



# Divorce 1: What Type of Divorce Do I Need?

This video covers the two types of divorce -- absolute divorce and limited divorce -- and also reviews the legal concept of separation. Annulment, a rare occurrence in which the court finds your marriage never existed, is not covered in this video.

## Absolute Divorce

- Absolute divorce ends a marriage. You and your spouse may remarry.
- You will resolve all issues related to alimony, or financial support, child custody, child support, and how marital property will be used and divided. Several videos in this series cover each of these topics with more detail.

## Limited Divorce

- A limited divorce allows you and your spouse to resolve some important issues, but it does not end your marriage. You cannot remarry.
- Consider getting a limited divorce if you have child-related issues or financial matters you need to address, but you do not yet have a legal reason, or grounds, for an absolute divorce. Legal reasons for divorce are covered in Part 2 of this series.
- The court may address finances, child custody, health insurance, use and possession of the family home and car. The court will not address how to divide your marital property.

## Separation

- There is no such thing as a “legal separation” in Maryland. If you and your spouse live apart with the intention of ending your marriage, and if you do not have sexual intercourse during that time, that constitutes separation.
- Separation can be a legal reason for divorce, depending on how long you and your spouse are separated. Part 2 in this series goes over the grounds, or legal reasons for divorce, including separation.
- Some couples choose to enter into a separation or marital settlement agreement before they file for divorce, or while they are waiting for their divorce to be final. This agreement is a contract between you and your spouse and may address issues such as child custody, child support, spousal support, property use, ownership or distribution of a home, car or personal property. A signed agreement can also be incorporated into the final divorce decree so that it is also enforceable as a court order.
- Craft an agreement with the help of a mediator or your lawyers. If you enter into an agreement and you do not have a lawyer, consider having it reviewed by a lawyer before you sign it.



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